

CSAP's Online Courses

Module 6: Preventing Elder Abuse

Case Study

Following the Department of Family Services' disclosure that elder abuse referrals increased 82 percent during a 6-year period, a supervisor in an Adult Protective Services (APS) unit in a mid-sized city decided to find ways to meet the growing need for services, including prevention.

The supervisor researched funding opportunities and gained support for creating a demonstration project funded by the U.S. Administration on Aging to promote development of local and State-level coalitions and test their effectiveness in preventing abuse. The supervisor also obtained volunteer help from ACTION, Volunteers in Service to America to help organize the coalition.

Eventually, a committee of 17 members was created to address concerns and assess needs. After the team formed, many members missed several meetings in a row, affecting the committee's viability. At this point, the group required team members attend a certain number of meetings a year. A facilitator also was appointed to keep the group on track.

Following a discussion of priorities, the committee agreed it should focus on training. To this end, the committee organized an inservice training team of nurses, social workers, substance abuse counselors, and in-home support workers. The group's plan included eight free, 2-hour workshops for providers each year on topics such as risk factors for elder abuse, respite for staff, and enhancing the quality of care.

Since its formation, the committee has expanded to address financial abuse and developed a task force that includes volunteers from banks, credit unions, law enforcement agencies, APS, and others. The task force helped develop procedures for reporting abuse and developed materials to distribute to financial professionals and the public.

This case study was based in part on reported activities by National Committee for the Prevention of Elder Abuse Affiliates.